



# Brownfields 2005 Grant Fact Sheet

## Rockford, IL

### EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic development to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. On January 11, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Under the Brownfields Law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

### Community Description

The City of Rockford was selected to receive two brownfields assessment grants. Rockford (population 150,115) once was a thriving manufacturing community, reaching its height during the 1960s. It has since faced decades of neglect and decline, and now has a poverty rate of 14 percent and a ten percent unemployment rate. It also is a diverse community with a population that is 31.6 percent minorities. The decline of manufacturing in the city left brownfields in the older and poorer areas of the city. The target areas for hazardous substances assessments are in the Central Business District and the Rock River Corridor, where about 33 percent of the population are minorities, the unemployment rate is 17.4 percent, and the poverty



### Assessment Grants

New  
2005

**\$200,000 for hazardous substances**  
**\$200,000 for petroleum**

EPA has selected the City of Rockford for two brownfields assessment grants. Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to conduct up to five Phase I and at least three Phase II site assessments of properties within the Central Business District and Rock River Corridor. Funds also will be used to develop cleanup plans and conduct community involvement activities. Petroleum grant funds will be used to conduct up to 25 Phase I and up to five Phase II site assessments of abandoned gas stations and petroleum-contaminated properties in the South Main Street and West State Street corridors.

### Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: [www.epa.gov/brownfields](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields).

EPA Region 5 Brownfields Team  
312-886-7576  
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

Grant Recipient: City of Rockford, IL  
815-987-5636

The cooperative agreement for this grant has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

rate is about 34 percent. The target areas for petroleum assessment are corridors along South Main Street, and West State Street, which are economically distressed areas with many abandoned gas stations. The populations in these areas are more than 40 percent minorities, and 21.6 percent of residents live in poverty. Brownfields in the area have had a negative

impact on development, presenting physical risks and visual blight to residents. Residential properties adjacent to many of these properties are poorly maintained, and parks are underutilized. Redevelopment will eliminate blight, protect human health, remove barriers to investment, create jobs, and improve property values.